

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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SUBJECT: INVITATION TO JAPANESE OFFICIALS

REF. 75 TOKYO 17838

FOR COMMERCE DR. JACK WILLIAMS, OFFICE OF PRODUCT
STANDARDS, OFFICE OF ASST. SECY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. OFFICIALS OF CANADIAN EMBASSY AND COUNCIL OF FOREST
INDUSTRIES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (COFI) VISITED EMBASSY
JAN. 9 AND EXPLAINED THAT GOC PLANS TO INVITE DELEGATION
OF JAPANESE TECHNICAL OFFICIALS WORKING ON NEW PLYWOOD
JAS TO VISIT CANADA IN FEBRUARY. THEY EXPRESSED CONCERN
THAT, WITH SUBSTANTIALLY SAME INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED, THEIR
INVITATION MAY CONFLICT WITH REFTEL APA INVITATION
AND A PENDING PNRC-FUNDED INVITATION TO GOJ TECHNICAIIS TO
ATTEND A "WOOD SYMPOSIUM" IN PORTLAND, ORE., DURING
WEEK FEB. 23. CANADIANS ASSERTED THAT THEIR PLANS
INFORMALLY DATE BACK TO LAST SUMMER'S JAPAN-CANADA
MINISTERIAL TALKS AND THAT CANADIAN EMBASSY HAS ALREADY
RECEIVED GOC AUTHORIZATION TO EXTEND FORMAL INVITATION
TO JAPANESE OFFICIALS. THEY SUGGESTED THAT OBJECTIVES
OF BOTH COUNTRIES COULD BE SERVED BY CONSOLIDATING
ARRANGEMENTS INTO ONE N. AMERICAN TRIP FOR THOSE
TECHNICIANS WHO BOTH COUNTRIES WISH TO INVITE AND SAID THEY
WOULD HOLD OFF ISSUING INVITATIONS TO JAPANESE FOR A FEW
DAYS IN ORDER TO TRY VIA COFI HEAD OFFICE IN
VANCOUVER CAN. TO WORK OUT AN ARRANGEMENT WITH PNRC
AND APA.

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2. REASON FOR HASTE IN THESE DEVELOPMENTS IS MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION'S UNEXPECTED ANNOUNCEMENT A FEW DAYS AGO THAT IT PLANS TO ISSUE REVISED 2 X 4 BUILDING CODE IN APRIL. THIS HAS IMPOSED A MARCH-APRIL DEADLINE ON MAF FOR COMPLETION OF NEW PLYWOOD JAS AND MEANS THAT TECHNICIANS N. AMERICAN VISIT WILL HAVE TO BE SCHEDULED VERY SOON FOR IT TO HAVE ANY INFLUENCE ON THEIR FINAL DECISIONS IN WRITING STANDARDS. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT ABE (CONSUMER DIV., MAF) ADVISED EMBASSY JAN. 6 THAT MAF WISHES TO BEGIN STRUCTURAL TESTS ON N. AM. 7.5 AND 9 MM 3-PLY "CC" GRADE PLYWOOD IMMEDIATELY AND ASKED EMBASSY TO ARRANGE FOR APA, AS AGREED EARLIER, TO DONATE 24 PANELS OF EACH FROM STOCKS IN JAPAN. CHECKS WITH LOCAL IMPORTERS TURNED UP ONLY CANADIAN-MADE SAMPLES, AND COFI HAS SUPPLIED THESE TO THE MINISTRY. (FYI: EMBASSY TRIED TO CONVINCE MAF TO TEST 9 MM U.S. "C-D" GRADE WHICH IS IN STOCK LOCALLY, BUT ABE SAID MAF NOT PREPARED AT THIS POINT TO TEST U.S. "C-D" OR "D".)

3. ACTION REQUESTED: DISCUSSION OF INFO.
PARAS. 1 - 2 ABOVE WITH APA AND PNRC AND A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH REFTEL INVITATION EITHER SEPARATELY OR IN TANDEM WITH THE CANADIANS. EMBASSY AWARE OF APA'S CONCERN ABOUT CANADIAN COMPETITION BUT RECOMMENDS THAT AN EFFORT BE MADE TO COOPERATE IN THIS ARRANGEMENT IN ORDER TO SPARE GOJ EMBARRASSMENT OF RECEIVING CONFLICTING INVITATIONS AND POSSIBLY DECIDING TO REJECT BOTH. COFI REP. (DAVID GRAHAM) SAID HE THOUGHT U.S.-CANADIAN DIFFERENCES ON PLYWOOD COULD EASILY BE EXAGGERATED TO THE DETRIMENT OF BOTH COUNTRIES AND ADDED THAT COFI WAS THINKING, BEFORE IT HEARD ABOUT U.S. INVITATION, OF ASKING APA'S PERMISSION TO BRING ITS JAPANESE GROUP DOWN TO TACOMA FOR A TOUR OF APA'S EXCELLENT TECHNICAL FACILITIES. GRAHAM SAID IF PRELIMINARY REACTION OF APA AND PNRC POSITIVE, HE WILL PROBABLY FLY TO TACOMA NEXT WEEK FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.
HODGSON

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